

THE BEACON



A PAPER FOR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL
AND THE HOME



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May Time.

BY ALIX THORN.

When all the brooks run chattering through
the meadows,
When every bird is twittering with glee,
When flowers and grasses nod to saucy
breezes,

And baby leaves are opening on each tree;
When butterflies flit gay from bud to blossom,
What then, I ask you, can a lassie do,
When all the world seems full of joy and
laughter,
But shake her curls and just be laughing
too?

Kindergarten Review.

For The Beacon.

Little Deeds of Kindness.

BY CAROLINE STRONG GREGORY.

When Madge Wilson was three years old, her mother died. Two years later her father married again. The second Mrs. Wilson was a broad woman, kind and unselfish, was devoted to Madge, and kept the image of the child's own mother fresh in the little girl's memory.

Madge dimly remembered one day pointing to a large painting which hung in the library, and turning to her second mother, asking, "Who's that?" and her second mother had answered, "That is your angel mother, dear."

Since then the picture had always been called that of the angel mother, and, as Madge grew older, she always spoke of her own mother as angel mother.

On the 5th of May, the year that Madge had passed her seventh birthday, Mrs. Wilson called the child to her and said, "Madge, this was your angel mother's birthday, and I think it would please your angel mother to have you remember her birthday by doing some kind deed for some one. This year we will take some of your playthings to poor Mrs. O'Connor's children."

Madge was delighted with the suggestion.

So the two set off with a well-filled basket of playthings which Madge had outgrown, and the little girl held tightly to her mother's hand as they went through Poplar Alley to where the O'Connors lived. The little children in the alley stared and followed and pointed at them as they were searching for the house, and, when they at last found it and handed the basket to Mrs. O'Connor, the little O'Connors, eight in number, peeked and smiled at her from behind their mother's apron strings. Madge had never forgotten that memorable day.

The custom was thus established, and every year on the 5th of May Madge thought of some special, kind, unselfish act which would please some one.

One year she picked a large basket full of violets and took them to old Mrs. Finch, who had been in bed for over a year with rheumatism.

Another year she made pin-wheels out of bright-colored paper and distributed them to the children at the Children's Hospital. How their faces beamed as she handed them around, and, as she fastened them to the beds of the little sufferers who were too sick to move, how their thin white faces brightened.

The year that Madge was seventeen was a busy one. It was her last year at high school, she belonged to several clubs, was president of her class, and her studies were hard. She did not begin to think of what



THE PET RABBIT.

she would do on the 5th of May this year until the day was nearly there.

Then, when the week arrived, she was asked to help give a senior party, which was to occur on the night of the 5th. As she was on the Entertainment Committee, the planning of this with her school work took much of her time.

When she awakened the morning of the 5th and glanced at her calendar, which hung above her bed, her first thought was, "My angel mother's birthday, and I have not planned what I am going to do."

As she lay thinking, she heard a tap on the door and her father's voice. "Get up, Madge," he called, "mother is not well this morning, so you will have to get the breakfast."

Madge was up and dressed in a few minutes, and her father, after a hurried meal, rushed off to work with the parting message, "I'm so sorry mother's ill. I probably shan't be able to be home until late to-night, I'm still serving on that jury in the Brown case. You will have to stay home from school and take care of mother."

When he had left, Madge sat thinking for a moment. "Give up the party," she said to herself. Oh, she did want to go to that party, and how could the seniors have it without her being there when she was on the Programme Committee!

"Well, anyway, no need to worry about it now," she soliloquized. "Perhaps mother will be better by afternoon, and she knows I've been planning for the party, so she will probably want me to go."

Her mother had one of her chronic sick headaches, but this time it seemed to be even worse than usual.

During the day there was little Madge could do for her excepting to keep the hot-water bag filled.

In the afternoon some of the girls telephoned to find out why Madge had not been at school.

"But you're coming to the party, aren't you?" asked one.

Madge winced hard, then bravely answered back: "I'm not sure, I'm afraid not. You call here about seven, and I'll give you the things for the games if I can't go. Of course, if mother's better by then, I'll be ready to go with you."

"Can't one of the neighbors stay with your mother, because we've got to have you, Madge, or the party won't go smoothly?" phoned one of the girls, who had never known what it meant to give up anything for any one.

"Perhaps one of the neighbors *could* stay here," said Madge; "but I'd rather not ask them. They can't wait on mother as I can—even if I do say it myself."

So the matter ended.

When seven o'clock arrived, Mrs. Wilson was no better, and Mr. Wilson had not returned. When the girls called for Madge, she gave them the articles for the games and told them she was awfully sorry not to be able to go with them.

Though some of the girls fussed and fumed and said, "It was a shame her mother had to take sick on this particular day," when they left they thought a great deal of Madge because she had given in so sweetly to staying home.

And, when they had gone, Madge went softly into her mother's room, and said: "May I rub your head for a little while, mother? I think it might make it better."

Madge stroked her mother's head, and

within an hour Mrs. Wilson had dropped into a peaceful slumber.

She awoke three hours later, feeling much refreshed. She found Madge still sitting by her.

As she stirred, Madge asked, "How is your head now, mother?"

"Much better, dear," was the answer.

A few minutes later Mr. Wilson came home.

As he bent over his wife he whispered, "Better, dear?"

"Yes," she rejoined, "thanks to Madge's care."

Then Madge turned and kissed her father and mother good-night. As she did so, she said sadly, "Mother, I have been thinking that to-day is the 5th of May, and it is the first 5th of May since I was seven that I haven't done some little act of charity in memory of my angel mother's birthday."

Then Mr. Wilson spoke: "What do you call staying home from a party to take care of your sick mother? Don't you think your angel mother would have thought that was the kindest deed you could do in remembrance of her birthday? I saw some of the girls on my way home, and they told me how they had missed you to-night."

"That's so, this was the night of the party," said Mrs. Wilson. "My headache made me forget it."

"I hadn't thought of that as being a kind deed," said Madge.

"But indeed it was," responded Mrs. Wilson. "Come and kiss me again, dear child."

Alma Mater.

BY PRISCILLA LEONARD.

The oldest university

Was not on India's strand,

Nor in the valley of the Nile,

Nor on Arabia's sand;

From time's beginning it has taught,

And still it teaches free,

Its learning mild to every child—

The school of Mother's Knee.

The oldest school to teach the law,

And teach it deeply, too,

Dividing what should not be done

From what each one should do,

Was not in Rome nor Ispahan

Nor by the Euxine Sea;

It held its sway ere history's day—

The school of Mother's Knee.

The oldest seminary, where

Theology was taught,

When love to God, and reverent prayer,

And the Eternal Ought

Were deep impressed on youthful hearts

In pure sincerity

Came to the earth with Abel's birth—

The school of Mother's Knee.

The oldest—and the newest, too—

It still maintains its place,

And from its classes, ever full,

It graduates the race.

Without its teaching, where would all

The best of living be?

'Twas planned by heaven this earth to

leave—

The school of Mother's Knee!

Youth's Companion.

For The Beacon.

The Trip to Daisy Bridge.

BY MABEL S. MERRILL.

Chapter I.

Dot and Charlie went over in the red oak pasture watching Ragweed.

"She's the worst acting cow we ever had in the family," said Dot, fanning herself with her sunbonnet.

Ragweed had just got through the fence into the piece where the new corn was coming up, and it had been a good deal of trouble to get her back.

"It's because she's only a calf," said Charlie, rubbing his pet's white nose while she tried to chew up the brim of his big straw hat. "She'll begin to behave better when she gets older."

"I wish she'd begin to-day!" sighed Dot. "We could go to the picnic at Daisy Bridge if it wasn't for Ragweed. Mother put up these luncheons for us so we wouldn't have to come 'way home to dinner at noon. She wouldn't care if we went to the picnic instead of staying all day in the pasture if we only knew what to do with the calf."

"We might take her to the picnic," said Charlie, laughing a little.

Dot stopped fanning herself and her eyes shone.

"We could tie her to a tree just before we got there," she cried. "She wouldn't be a bit of trouble. Here's the rope where we hitched her to the alder bush when she walked on the strawberries faster than we could pick them."

Charlie looked over the fence at the smooth shady road winding down over the hill.

"It goes to Daisy Bridge," he said. "But it's four crooked miles, I've heard father say. We couldn't walk, Dot, and then come all the way back at night."

"We can take turns riding on Ragweed's back," cried Dot. "She always lets us do that. First I'll lead her with the rope while you ride, and then I'll ride and you lead."

They were not long in getting ready to start. There was a place in the fence where they could take down a rail and lead Ragweed through. They tied the rope around her neck, and Charlie took the end in his hand while Dot climbed a stump and scrambled from there to the calf's back.

"Now give me the luncheon basket to hold in my lap, so you won't have a thing to carry," she said.

"I may want both hands to manage Ragweed if she should take it into her head to caper a little," Charlie said.

He pulled at the rope, the calf followed him out into the road, and they all moved away in good order. The children had played with Ragweed this way ever since she was big enough to carry one of them, and she seemed to like it.

"What a pretty, shady road, and what fun it is to be going somewhere instead of staying all day in that old pasture," cried Dot, hugging the luncheon basket as she looked about.

"Specially to a place you've never been," said Charlie, tugging away at the rope. "I've always wanted to go to Daisy Bridge. And 'tisn't far from there to the Centre Village where the circus is. S'posen we should meet the circus, Dot!"

"I'd like it if the bears and things didn't get away and come after me," answered Dot. "Can we see the circus from Daisy Bridge?"

"No, but it might come by there on its

way to the Falls," Charlie said. "There's going to be an airship go up, too, from the Centre, with a man in it. Maybe we could see that if we get there in time."

The road went winding over the hills and through shady valleys in pleasant country fashion. Once they went through a beautiful piece of woodland where a red squirrel poked his saucy head out of a hole in the trunk of a tree as if he wondered what they were doing on his land. Then they came to a low meadow with bobolinks singing in the willows, and then they went up another long hill.

"It's your turn to ride, Charlie," said Dot, "but first I guess we'd better stop and have luncheon."

They "camped" in a pretty shady place by the roadside.

"There, I've tied Ragweed to this bush so she can eat grass or lie down, whichever she likes best," said Charlie. "She's had a good drink out of the brook, so she's all right. Come on, here's our dining-room, and a beauty, too!"

A fine, old oak tree made a green roof over their heads, and there was a carpet of soft green grass under foot. Right beside them a red lily, the first one they had seen this June, was lifting its bright cup to catch the sunlight. Not far away there was a cool little spring bubbling out from under a rock.

"It's 'most as good as being a gypsy and living in a tent," said Dot. "Oh, look, Charlie, I can see a town 'way off there. Don't you see roofs of houses and a church spire just like a white finger?"

"It's the Centre Village where the circus is," answered Charlie, whose mind was still running on the bears and things, as Dot called them. "If we could only see far enough, we might get a look at the elephant."

Dot was setting the table on the smooth top of an oak stump. There were strawberry turnovers in the basket, besides custards, sandwiches, and a little, round curd cheese as white as a snowball.

"Why, there's three of everything," said Dot. "Here's three turnovers, three custards, and, oh, here's jelly cakes that I didn't see; there's three of them, too. Mother must have thought we were going to have company! There, now I know, she said that little French boy might come down to cut bushes in the pasture while we were there, and he never has any dinner with him."

"Wish I was company!" said a voice so close to them that they jumped.

(To be continued.)

The Story of the Silver Spider.

BY CAROLYN S. BAILEY.

In the prettiest corner of a very pretty garden there lived, once upon a time, a pretty silver Spider. She wore a silver dress all covered with jet, and she had silver legs for walking and silver arms for spinning, and she had a fine large pocket with a ball of web stuff inside all silver color, too, like the rest of her.

And one morning in June when the grass was so tall and green that it seemed like a forest above her head, and the sun was shining so brightly that it made everything in the world glitter, the silver Spider said to her very small self:

"I think I will spin me a house."



MANZANETA OF THE SIERRA NEVADAS.

So she fastened one end of her ball of web stuff to a tall pink clover, and she ran with the other end to a tall yellow buttercup, and then she went back to the clover again and over to a grass blade.

"Now I must make my windows," she said.

So she crossed over and under the silver threads until she had made a number of pretty windows to look out from and see how pleasant the world looked.

"What a very fine house I have!" said the silver Spider, going off a little way to look at it. "I think I will live in it all my life long."

But, ah, just then it began to rain very hard.

Patter, patter came down the drops of rain. They bent the pink clover and they drenched the yellow buttercup. They filled the earth with water, and the silver Spider had to run very fast or she would have been drowned. The rain pelted so hard that it tore down the little house and there was not a bit of it left.

But the silver Spider was the sort of small person who never gives up. The next morning when the rain was over, she said:

"I must spin myself another house."

So she fastened one end of her web stuff to a red rosebush and the other end to a white rosebush, and she crossed over and back a number of times.

"Now I must make more windows than before," she said, "to look out from, and see the rosebuds."

So she went over and under many more times, and she made a more beautiful house than before with many, many windows.

"What a very pleasant home this will be!" said the silver Spider as she sat down beside one of the windows. "I think I shall live here all summer."

But just then the wind began to blow very hard. It shook the trees and it bent the rosebushes, and the silver Spider it blew to the ground. The wind blew so hard that it tore the little house to bits, and there was not a thread of it left.

Perhaps you think the silver Spider was discouraged. No, indeed, for she was the sort of small person who never, never gives

up. The next day when the wind was over, she said:

"I must spin myself another house."

So she began spinning a new little silver house, down low in the grass, and she fastened her ends of web stuff only to grass blades, for she thought they would be safer so.

"I must make more windows than I ever made before," she said, "to watch for the children when they pass."

So after a day or two, when the third house was done, and the silver Spider was all cosily settled inside, along through the grass came a boy.

He was a very big boy, who had just put on knickerbockers and laced-up shoes that could squeak. He hurried along very fast through the grass, for he was going to school.

"Dearie me!" said the silver Spider to her very small self, peeping out through the window, "I never before knew how large a child's feet are! What, oh, what if he should step on me!"

Just then the boy looked down in the grass, and saw the silver house.

"Nothing but an old spider's web," he said.

He lifted his foot—but he really *did not* step on it. I don't know how it happened, but he just went around the other side.

So the small silver Spider lived all summer in the grass, and the rain and the wind never troubled her any more. She just looked out of her little windows and had a very pleasant time.

And was it not splendid? And was it not because she was the sort of small person who never, never gives up?

Kindergarten Review.

A Pitcher of Mignonette.

BY HENRY CUYLER BUNNER.

A pitcher of mignonette

In a tenement's highest casement—

Queer sort of flower-pot—yet

That pitcher of mignonette

Is a garden in heaven set,

To the little sick child in the basement—

The pitcher of mignonette,

In the tenement's highest casement.

For The Beacon.

Acorns and Ambitions.

BY CHARLES W. CASSON.

I know a child who can hold a great oak between his thumb and finger just as easily as though he were a huge giant. He can hold it just as easily as though it were an acorn. And this is for the reason that it *is* an acorn.

When you take up an acorn in your hand, you are in reality lifting an oak, as every one of you knows. It is just a tiny thing in appearance, but a very great thing in reality. For it contains all the power and the possibility of the oak tree that will root itself into the ground, and stand so strongly that all the readers of this paper could not by tugging at it pull it over.

A pebble and an acorn may be alike in size and shape, but they are wholly different in every other way. The one is just a pebble and can never become anything more than a pebble. But the acorn has something within it that will make it infinitely greater than a pebble or an acorn.

That something we may call ambition. In the acorn shell there are life and a desire to grow, and to grow large. There is the longing for greater things. There is the determination to become strong. There is the acorn-ambition to become the oak-achievement.

And it is ambition that makes great the child, who is after all only the human acorn. If he has no wish to become strong and noble and great, he will never do anything worth while. He will be like the acorn that prefers to lie in a sunny place all the time, and does not wish to bury itself in the dark, cold earth.

Yet this is what every one of us must do if we are going to succeed. If our ambition is going to amount to anything, we must be willing to work, and work at times in dark and unpleasant places. If you seek only pleasure and a good time, you will never develop the oak-life that is yours. To become strong one must be willing to give up pleasure.

Sometimes the acorn is killed by having its heart eaten by a worm. You will find acorns in the woods with a tiny hole in their sides, and you may know that the oak-life has gone. Just because of that tiny hole the great oak has died.

And you have to guard yourself all the time against losing your ambition to become great and strong. A little worm of discouragement is always working to get in. If it does, there is danger indeed. We must just keep guard over ourselves, and say over and over, "I will be strong and good."

The first oak-sprout is very small. The acorn must think, if it can think, that it would have been better to remain an acorn in the sun than to shut itself in the earth, just to produce so tiny and tender a thing.

And every one of us will be tempted to feel discouraged at the results of our first efforts to do things that are really worth while. Every one of you will be tempted to think that it would have been better for you to have just had a good time, and that ambition is a very foolish thing.

But, if the acorn and the human acorn persevere, there will surely come a time when it will be very evident that all the effort was worth while. And, when the oak and the strong man are created, every one will know the real worth of ambition.

But sometimes the acorn needs help to develop itself. I remember walking through Lynn Woods many years ago, and finding

an acorn lying upon a hot, flat rock in the sunshine. Having pity on it, I dug a little hole in the moist earth and dropped it in. Then it had a chance to grow into an oak.

And a very few weeks afterwards I was walking down a street in Glasgow, when two little children, ragged, dirty, pinched-faced, rushed from an alley and, grasping some chunks of coal that had shaken off a passing coal team, dashed back into the alley again.

As I saw them, I remembered the acorn that I had planted across the sea. Here were two little human acorns, with all the powers of oakhood, lying upon the flat rock of that city street. Do you wonder that, as I went on, I determined that I would do all that I could to give all human acorns the same chance I had given to the oak acorn in Lynn?

And will you not help also?

The Parable of the Home.

From "The Parents' Council," by Rev. Pascal Harrower, in *Religious Education* for April.

"A boy of twelve in old Jerusalem one day realized that he had reached the age when he must think for himself and make decisions. Without false ideas of independence, he went back to his home and workshop, and did the things his parents thought best; but he began that day to live his own life and to make his plans for helping the world. He was not ambitious to be rich or famous. He would not fight, and he hated meanness, cruelty, injustice, and hypocrisy. When he grew to manhood, he healed the sick people, comforted the sorrowful, pitied those who did wrong, divided his food with the hungry, strengthened the weak, and made friends with children. He loved the sea and boats, the hills and fields, flowers and birds. He was brave in danger, patient when persecuted, heroic in temptation, pure in heart, and so loving and unselfish that millions of people who never saw him would lay down their lives for him. He did not preach long sermons. He never wrote a book. You could easily commit to memory all his recorded words. He died poor and almost friendless, and yet we celebrate his birthday throughout the world; we date our letters from the year of his birth; we offer in Congress and Parliaments prayers in his name. The history of his life is printed in four hundred languages. Kings and emperors, presidents and judges, statesmen and scholars, peasants and slaves, declare this to be the greatest and best of all books. Thousands of magnificent buildings have been erected to him,—abbeys, cathedrals, and churches. Our greatest colleges were dedicated to this poor boy who never went to college, never left his own little country, and died when he was only thirty-three years old. From his life and death, painters, poets, orators, and musicians have gained their highest inspiration. From this wonderful, perfect boyhood and the work it began, girls and boys of every land may learn kindness, courage, obedience, and devotion to duty." The home where this boy lived was not a home of culture and wealth or conspicuous station, but it was founded in the simple faith of noble hearts, to whom the reverences of God and childhood were abidingly real.

The best and highest thing a man can do in a day is to sow a seed, whether it be in the shape of a word, an act, or an acorn.

JOHN BOYLE O'REILLY.

RECREATION CORNER.

ENIGMA XLIV.

I am composed of 11 letters.
My 3, 10, 5, 11, is a girl's name.
My 9, 7, 6, 5, 11, is a place where milk and butter are produced.
My 5, 2, 10, 1, equals 480 sheets of paper.
My 8, 4, 10, 1, is a kind of soil.
My *whole* is a near-approaching holiday.

HEDWIG FALLER.

ENIGMA XLV.

I am composed of 10 letters.
My 1, 6, 2, 9, is a fruit.
My 4, 10, 2, 7, 6, is to go away.
My 5, 3, 8, is to repent.
My *whole* was a soldier in the Révolution.

MADELYN DODGE.

WORD BUILDING.

1. Take a vowel, add a consonant before it, and get your mother. Add a consonant to this, and get your father. Add vowel to this, and get part of a horse.
2. Take a vowel, add a consonant before it, and get a personal pronoun. Add a consonant to this, and get encountered. Add a vowel, and get to measure.
3. Take a consonant, add a vowel before it, and get a conjunction. Add a vowel to this, and get what you did this morning. Put a consonant at the beginning and get the head.
4. Take a vowel, add a consonant before it, and get a pronoun. Add another consonant, and get the border of a garment. Add another consonant, and get a plant from which cordage is made.
5. Take a vowel, put a consonant before it, and get to perform. Add a consonant, and get a small point used in writing. Add a vowel, and get to be weakly affectionate.

ORIGINAL ARITHMETIC.

Example.—What number becomes even by subtracting one? Answer.—Seven.

1. What number, by adding one, becomes sound?
2. What number, by adding one, becomes isolated?
3. What number, by inserting one, becomes finely-ground wheat?
4. What number, by subtracting one, becomes a vegetable growth?
5. What number, by subtracting one, becomes a preposition?
6. What number, by subtracting one, becomes an exclamation?

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 31.

ENIGMA XL.—Suffer little children to come unto me.

ENIGMA XLII.—Samuel Taylor Coleridge.
TWISTED BIRDS.—1. Oriole. 2. Raven. 3. Canary. 4. Parrot. 5. Bobolink. 6. Pelican. 7. Linnet. 8. Robin. 9. Condor. 10. Pheasant.

HALF SQUARE.—B E A C O N
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THE BEACON.

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